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Up-to-Date at Applewood Newsletter (May 2018)

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MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS:



The Guest Greeting Team, led by Ellen Green, is a separate ministry from the Greeting Team. Find out more below!

Throughout Scripture, the Lord provides examples of how He blesses hospitality. In Joshua 2, Rahab is spared from destruction after demonstrating hospitality to the spies. In Luke 19:1-10, we read about how Zacchaeus welcomed Jesus into his home and the Lord transformed Zacchaeus' heart. This ministry is meant to be an outlet in which to extend His gift of hospitality within our own church. A quote by Saint Teresa of Avila states, "Christ has no body on earth but yours, no hands but yours, no feet but yours. Yours are the eyes through which Christ's compassion for the world is to look out; yours are the feet with which He is to go about doing good; and yours are the hands with which He is to bless us now." We pray this ministry is a way to share the love of Christ with any and all who enter the doors of AWCC.

As we remember how the Lord has called us to Himself, here are some ways all of us can be guest greeters!

- I might be stating the obvious... make a greeting and invitation personal. Seek to find commonalities, related experiences, etc. which help make connections with our guests. Express how you enjoyed having them worship with us and getting to meet them.

- Be sensitive to guests' body language, past experiences, and what they bring with them.
- Share information about upcoming church events and invite them (Alafia, church picnic and baptism in Golden, etc.) - make it personal.
- Invite them back to attend a service the following Sunday.

The Guest Greeting Team is in need of an extra volunteer or two, so if you feel the Lord is calling you to serve in this capacity, please email Ellen Green at ellenwgreen@gmail.com or feel free to catch her in person on a given Sunday!

LOOKING FORWARD:



Ice Cream Party

May 20th after church service

Each year we celebrate the hard work our kids put into memorizing Scripture during the school year. It is SO important to put God's Word into our hearts so that we can know Him and live according to His will. The Bible is alive and active (Heb. 4:12), useful for many things (2 Tim. 3:16) such as teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness. Let's cheer our kids on and let them know how proud we are of them for learning God's Word week in and week out as we share a time of fellowship and ice cream.



VBS is Coming!

VBS Is Coming! AWCC is gearing up for its third annual VBS! Vacation Bible School is a great way to minister to the children in our church as well as reach out to the children in our community. Two years ago we averaged 32 kids a day, and that number grew to 45 last year. This year we are going to launch into God's Galaxy to learn about who God is and who He has

made us to be. Our world will try to push an identity on our kids that is anything but who God made them to be, and we want to help them dig deep into their God-given identity for life. VBS will run June 11-15th from 9-11:30 each morning. The cost is only \$10 per child, and you can find more information and register at awcclive.org/vbs.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED!

Vacation Bible School (VBS)



VBS is coming up quickly! It will run June 11th -15th and volunteers are still needed in various capacities. Please add your name to the VBS volunteer sign up list in the foyer

of the church. You may also contact Sarah Lynch at spiffysip@msn.com for more information - or catch her at church on a given Sunday.

The following positions still need to be filled:

- Nursery help – to watch the younger children (3 preschoolers) of our volunteers
- Crafts Leader – an adult to lead the craft – you will have youth helpers!
- Snacks team – help make and serve snacks each day

VBS Workdays:

- Every Friday in May – decoration and art help 9-12, come whenever you want, no skill or expertise required. We have projects for everyone!
- June 2 – VBS training 10-11am at the church
- June 9 – VBS decorating 9-12ish

NOTEWORTHY:

Congratulations, Sarah!

Sarah Lynch, our Director of Children's Ministry, has recently completed the process to earn her bi-vocational ministry license. Through earning this license, Sarah is now the Children's Pastor. She has shared this calling and journey with us below.

A few years ago I went to lunch with several Covenant children's ministers and met Steve Berger, who is the Director of Children, Family and Intergenerational Ministries in the ECC. He suggested looking into the bi-vocational ministry license. This seemed overwhelming at first; however, as I continued to work as the Children's Ministry Leader at AWCC, I felt a desire to have more accountability and some credibility. Pastor Guy affirmed that I should go for the bi-vocational ministry license. Sometimes God uses a variety of ways to affirm decisions. Through personal study and conversations with various individuals, I felt His leading me to work towards this license.

The bi-vocational ministry license is granted by the Evangelical Covenant Church (ECC) as a ministry credential. This is for people who work part-time in ministry but hold another job outside of the church (currently that job is "Mom" for me!). This license will bring more accountability and growth for me, which I believe will be a benefit passed on to the children and families in our church.

The process involved filling out paperwork, reading, reflecting, researching, and writing an eight page paper answering several theological questions. I'm happy to share this paper with anyone who is interested! After submitting the paperwork and paper in February, the final step involved an interview with the Committee on Ministerial Standing comprised of ten individuals. During this interview, I gave a ten minute devotional and spent the next 45 minutes answering questions posed by the committee

members. The recommendation of the committee for approval of the bi-vocational license will go to the Department of Ordered Ministry and then onto the Annual Meeting in June for final approval. Until that time, I have been issued an interim license.

To maintain this license, I will take a Vocational Excellence class which is part of the Covenant Orientation. Additionally, I will be required to submit a report on four books per year from a list of books provided by the Covenant. Finally, I will complete an interview every three years for as long as I have my license. I am committed to this process and am excited for the growth it will provide. For more information regarding the bi-vocational license please visit <https://covchurch.org/vocational-ministry/credentialing/licenses/bvl/>.

A Calling Towards Discipleship

2018 Spring Women's Retreat

Around twenty women from AWCC spent the weekend of March 16th at the Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp outside of Divide, Colorado. We listened to videos of four speakers from the annual IF: Gather conference - Check out their website if you want to know more about them and their materials - <https://www.ifgathering.com/>. The theme of the conference and our weekend as well was II Timothy 1:6-7, "For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of hands, for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control." The speakers connected the verse to the call to discipleship. The challenge they gave was to start discipling and that we are all able. After each talk, we heard from at least one person from our church. They shared a personal story that related to the talk. Afterwards, we broke into small groups to discuss a list of follow up questions and anything else from the talk. Eileen Bechler led us in worship before each talk. Live music was a real bonus. In addition to structured time, we hiked, ate, looked at the stars, had great conversations and rested. Overall, it was a sweet weekend of deepening friendships in Christ and being open to being used in ways that make us uncomfortable and require deeper trust.

As the leader of small groups and discipleship, Carrie Wallace, is working on gathering a list of tools to aid in increasing the presence of discipleship in our church. Be on the lookout for a series on discipleship in future newsletters.

Q & A with the Leadership Team

You might be wondering how the new Leadership Team works. I wanted to hear how our new structure is working so far. I sent the team a list of questions and they agreed to share their responses in the newsletter. The team would like to encourage anyone in the congregation to attend the monthly meetings.

Below are responses from several members (Sam Clark - SC, Rosie Hughes - RH, Jennifer Melby - JM, and Lee Richman - LR). The other members will share next month.

1. How did God call you to be on the leadership team?

RH: When I think about God calling me to things I usually come up with a blank. My experience of being called or led by God has been more of a "general call" rather than a specific one. My understanding is that we're all called in the body of Christ to do what we are capable to do to further the kingdom of God whether that be leadership or worker bee. I prayed about LT and felt no hesitancy regarding this opportunity to serve, so I said yes.

JM: The Lord opened the door for this opportunity and I felt I needed to trust His prompting. Corrie ten Boom once said, "It's not my ability, but my response to God's ability that counts." I trust in the strength and wisdom of the Lord to guide my steps.

LR: My (almost) daily prayer of commitment includes the words, "I'll do anything you want me to do." When the nominating team asked me to consider serving on the LT, those words came to mind. Prayer confirmed that call.

2. Did you have any advance ideas about how the team would function?

RH: Yes, I had a few ideas about how the LT would function, all based on FOST information.

JM: The FOST report has provided a broad perspective on how the team should function. During our first meeting, prior to being voted on, we had the opportunity to discuss our heart for the church. As with anything new, learning how we function as a team is going to be an ongoing process in which we constantly seek the Lord's guidance.

LR: Yes. Having served on the FOST team, which included meeting with a pastor who had made the switch from the Council of Deacons model to LT, I had some preconceived notions of how the LT might function in ways very different from the Council of Deacons.

3. Describe a typical team meeting?

RH: I think it's too early to describe a typical meeting! None have been set to the same music so far.

JM: We have started discussing our meeting structure and processes; this will be an ongoing discussion for a while. Currently, we open our meetings with Scripture reading and time for reflection and discussion about the reading. Then we pray and discuss the agenda that has been outlined. Our agenda topics include, but are not limited to,

updates provided by ministry team leaders, ideas congregants have brought to us, topics related to our function as a Leadership Team, and thoughts the Lord has placed on our hearts. Recently, we have started the process of going through the Veritas Report. Finally, we close our meetings in prayer.

LR: Our first meeting occurred prior to our official installation as the LT. We got to know each other, developed a team spirit, and assigned members to liaison with the Ministry Teams. After that, each member of the LT communicated with the leaders of the Ministry Teams to make contact, to encourage them, to determine how the LT could help facilitate the ministry, and to find out how we could pray for them.

We haven't had a "typical" meeting yet, other than chocolate always being present, Opening Prayer and Scripture Reading (lectio divina), and reciting the AWCC mission statement, to remind us of why we're doing what we're doing. During our first official (and very long) meeting, we reviewed the Constitution, Bylaws, and Policy and Procedure manual, to make sure we are always in compliance with our foundational principles. We discussed our role as the LT as we see it. We also heard reports on each of the Ministries. There were extended discussions and prayer for several of them. We closed with prayer for our church, its ministries and their leaders.

Our April meeting included a discussion of how we could make our meetings more concise (given the length of our first meeting), prioritizing items while not allowing less urgent items to stack up. We also talked about having regular "vision" meetings, as well as occasional casual meetings with all the ministry leaders. We discussed how we can encourage and support our ministries, making sure we don't cross the boundary into managing them, and tackled a number of action items.

Our upcoming meeting will include a review of the Vitality Team report and FOST documents, and a discussion of how they could and should inform our church direction and our leadership.

As you can see, we haven't settled into a routine yet. We are still finding our way, though it is clearly in the light, and not in the darkness.

4. What current areas is the team praying about?

SC: One major thing we're praying about is the Vitality Team Report created by many of AWCC's members between 2013 and 2015. A lot of work and prayer on the part of the Vitality Team members went into this report, and we as a Leadership Team want to use the insights documented in the report to guide our vision and actions. We have begun reviewing, discussing, and praying about the observations and recommendations of the Vitality Team. This covers many aspects of individual relationships with God, our community together as believers, and our ministries to the world, so the process will

take time. Nonetheless, we are excited to consider how it can help us to clarify the vision and direction of AWCC.

RH: Prayer and focus has been a combination of concerns and hopes for various ministries as well as the indistinct topic of mission and vision as we move forward. I think we all feel a bit awed by the responsibility of setting the bar higher and more creative than the typical neighborhood church. Finding our place will include evangelism, discipleship, education and presence. We are praying to that end knowing that it will take surrender, diligence, service and humility.

JM: We are constantly in prayer about using our time and efforts for the glory of our Lord. We pray for the team as a whole, as well as the church, ministries, and ministry team leaders. We pray for guidance and wisdom as we discuss topics on our agenda.

LR: Prayer. Several ministries, the parking lot, the Community Garden, a few ministry leadership roles, how we as a church and we, as the Leadership Team, can glorify God.

5. Are there defined roles on the leadership team - besides the team leader?

RH: We are beginning to develop a group culture which is very cool to be a part of. Rather than defined roles (except the obvious ones) we are playing a little personality ping pong as we discuss issues and ideas. In our little group we have visionaries as well as concrete thinkers and planners; experts in compassion and experts in organization; devil's advocates and liability watchers. It's great to see that we're diverse and able to see both big picture and little picture snapshots of what has transpired in the past and what may be possible now and in the future. We have people young and old, inexperienced and experienced. We're learning how to do this together.

JM: The only defined roles include Pastor, Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, and Members. In this model of leadership, there is a level of flexibility/fluidity in how we define our responsibilities. This allows the team to adapt our roles to the needs of the church as they arise. We are continuing to learn about one another's strengths and how we can best work together.

LR: I don't think there are many clearly defined roles: Sam is the official keeper of documents. Jennifer has taken on congregation communication, as you know, Jim, Guy and I serve as institutional memory (I can't remember anything less than 10 years old). Every member of the LT is thoughtful, wise, gracious, kind and devoted to God and AWCC. Those are great roles.

6. For those who have served on other church committees or council, do you notice a difference between the leadership team and the previous models?

RH: Yes, there is a difference. This model is less defined and therefore less predictable. There seems to be a blending of purpose rather than compartmentalized

tasks. It remains to be seen how this will impact the function of the church as a whole, however, it's an exciting step forward to sift through ministry options that may succeed or fail depending on the passion of the congregation rather than the set plans of the Council (or what has always been done). We are eager to see how God will lead, not only us but each individual who attends AWCC. Exciting stuff!

LR: The LT feels completely different than the Council of Deacons. The meetings feel similar to Acts 2: They devoted themselves to teaching, to fellowship, to the breaking of chocolate, and to prayer. There is almost no managerial function. We are free to go where the Spirit leads us.

NEWSLETTER MODUS OPERANDI & CONTACTS

Communicate

Email, call or write a handwritten note to Laura Brant and Jennifer Melby about a story or topic you would like to submit for the newsletter.

Submit

The deadline for submitting material for the newsletter to Laura or Jennifer will be the 10th of each month. Please submit material to us via email as that will make it easy to compile everything for the newsletter.

Distribution

We send out the *Up-to-Date at Applewood Newsletter* via email and the AWCC website around the 15th of each month**.

**If you would like to receive a hard copy, please see Laura or Jennifer.

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